

MC Connect

“Insider Tips to Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, and More Profitably”

A Shark’s Take

In October I had the privilege of meeting Robert Herjavec, best known for his role on ABC’s Shark Tank. On the show, Robert is introduced as “the immigrant son of a factory worker” who comes from very humble beginnings. He now owns The Herjavec Group, one of the largest IT security firms in North America. Of course, he is also part-owner in many more businesses as a result of his involvement with Shark Tank. Now, before I go on, I need to get one thing clear: if you don’t watch Shark Tank, you and I can no longer be friends. Please stop reading this article.

OK, you’re still here. Good. I feel I need to start by explaining that I’ve never had much interest in celebrities. I hear people talk of catching a glimpse of this famous actor or that famous singer and my eyes glass over as I head off to my happy place. They’re just people after all. Why are they any more important than me or you or anyone else?

I still feel that way. Mostly. I decided a while back that it was time for me to up my game in the world of technology, and more specifically the world of business. As part of this quest to better myself, I joined an organization that specializes in training IT companies. I head to Nashville (occasionally other locations) at least once per quarter to further my education. Most of these conferences feature at least one “celebrity”. I put that in quotes because many of them are only famous in their own circles. Still, it feels great to rub elbows with some of the movers and shakers in the business world.

Of all such celebrities that I’ve met so far, Robert Herjavec was easily



the highlight (see the last two sentences of paragraph one). In full disclosure, the meeting consisted of about a three second photo-shoot. With such a rare opportunity, the only thing I could think to say was, “I don’t know how you smile for this long!” (He probably took 300 pictures that day.) It was a dorky question, true to my socially awkward nature. But it was on my mind. Because he was smiling. And I generally don’t. His reply was simple, “I’m always smiling.” Simple, but it was the message that had the most impact of anything I heard over the course of our 3-day training event. I guess that’s because I am *not* always smiling.



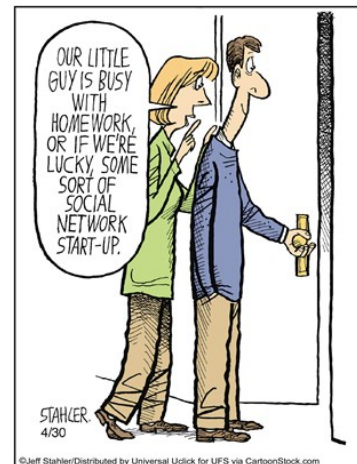
“As a business owner, you don’t have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That’s where we shine! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!”

- Justin Shelley, Master Computing

November 2014
DENTON, TEXAS

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Before the photo shoot, during Robert's presentation, he talked a bit about the importance of being happy. He suggested that our employees expect it of us. It is our job to motivate and inspire, and not to discourage.

I'm sure we all acknowledge the importance of attitude, but I know that at least in this one area, I had lost sight of it. It was a very timely reminder for me.

Robert didn't just talk about being happy. I know I need more than a smile to feel fulfilled in my business ventures. I need growth. I aspire to lofty things. One of my fellow IT colleagues asked Robert during the Q&A session how he took his business from under \$500,000 to over \$250 million in such a short time. His response was again very simple, but still very profound. "I just got tired of being small." Could it really be that simple? Perhaps. It's amazing what someone can do with the right attitude. Remember, Robert is the son of an immigrant factory worker. No silver spoon here.

The last point that I'll mention is Robert's take on sales. Badly paraphrasing, he emphasized that a CEO's most important job is sales. And every manager is responsible for sales. He said that some will say, "My job is not to do sales, but to manage." According to Robert, that is nonsense. He emphasized the point over and over. My notes: "Sales! Sales! Sales!" I don't remember all the specifics, and I don't write fast enough to take good notes, but he certainly drove the point home. So in a nutshell, Robert's take on business (and life) as I understood it is simple: be happy, think big, and sell.

Hackers Are Now Targeting Macs

Until recently, Macintosh computer users have long enjoyed relative freedom from hacker attacks; however, researchers at Symantec Corporation say online criminals are now setting their sites on Mac users.

Online porn hunters are the latest target. Visitors to certain web sites are led to believe they can download a free video player when in fact they are installing malicious code onto their Macs.

Once the users authorize the transaction, the hackers can redirect the users future browsing to fraudulent web sites and possibly steal the user's information or passwords. Sometimes they simply send ads for other pornographic web sites. This results in thousands of dollars in income for the criminals.

While you may think that Macs are essentially more secure than PCs because they are built better, security experts would argue differently. They believe that the Mac is actually no more secure than a PC. In fact, they note that the relatively low number of viruses, exploits and other cyber attacks directed at Mac users is due to Apple's relatively small share of the computer market.

"I don't think that the Mac OS is more secure than Windows -- I think it is safer than Windows because there are less people trying to attack it. There is a big difference," Natalie Lambert, a senior analyst at Forrester Research recently shared with MacNewsWorld.

With that said, the fact remains that for every single attack on a Mac, there are at least 100 attacks on Windows-based systems.

So what should you do if you own a Mac? Use the same safe online surfing practices as PC users, keep your anti-virus software up-to-date, never open strange e-mails from unknown sources, and only verify user names and passwords by phone with your bank or other financial institutions.

New *Legal* Reasons Why All Businesses Need An E-mail Archiving And Management System

It's a classic he-said, she-said case that ends up in court on a daily basis...

Widget buyer Ms. Robinson testified that Mr. Smith, the Widgets Corp. sales manager, told her that if she put her order in immediately, the price would be discounted by 20 percent. Mr. Smith argued that that was not what he said. According to his testimony, he agreed to give a 20 percent discount only if Ms. Robinson ordered at least one million widgets, which she did not. The widgets were manufactured and delivered, and the client was billed for the full amount. The client is refusing to pay the full amount and the manufacturing company is throwing it to a collection agency. If brought into a court of law, who would be right?

Provided that neither party can produce a signed contract to back up their case, there is no way of knowing who is right.

However, let's suppose Ms. Robinson produces an e-mail she sent to her boss copying Mr. Smith that says, "I made a deal with Mr. Smith, the sales manager at Widgets Corp., to get a 10 percent discount for 500,000 widgets ordered." Let's also suppose Mr. Smith cannot produce any e-mails, contracts, or memos to the contrary. Now the chances of Ms. Robinson winning her case go up exponentially. When faced with two credible witnesses whose recollection of an event or agreement are in dispute, the court is most likely to favor the person who has corroborating documentation to support their side of the story.

E-mail has Become the Primary Means of Communication and Negotiation

In the not too distant past, business people would communicate primarily through face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations, faxes, and the occasional paper document. When a "my word against your word" dispute arose, a court case could be awarded to the person who seemed more confident or credible.

Nowadays, e-mail has become the default mode of communication. It's very common for a buyer to communicate to a seller entirely by e-mail. Transactions are done without the two ever meeting and in some cases, never speaking. As a result, the "my word against your word" conundrum becomes more of a contest between e-mails, as opposed to a competition between the memories of the people involved.

The upside of this situation is that if you can produce an e-mail that supports your version of the facts, you have a leg up if it goes to court. The downside is that most people are careless about what they say in an e-mail. They don't think about it ending up as an exhibit in a courtroom under close scrutiny leaving them with the only explanation, "I know that's what I said, but that's not what I meant."

Food Service Company Awarded \$2.5 Million Thanks To A Few "Innocent" E-mails

*Example: A food service company was contracted to provide all meals at 48 nursing homes. Ultimately, the food service company claimed that it was underpaid over \$2 million and sued in federal court. The president of the nursing home company claimed that the food service company had made certain oral cost guarantees that were not honored, thereby justifying the underpayments. However, a detailed review of the nursing home company's internal e-mails revealed that its executives had "privately" expressed substantial doubt about the supposed oral guarantees. The e-mails were given to the jury, which awarded the food service company \$2.5 million.

What Should You Do To Protect Yourself?

The most important thing you can do is think twice before hitting "send." If you are a manager or employer, train your employees to be careful about what they communicate via e-mail and constantly remind them of the dangers. Once an e-mail is sent, you cannot get it back. Another good practice is having a system for archiving and managing e-mail communications. This goes double for certain companies because of regulations like the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

*Story reprinted from *How E-Mail Is Revolutionizing Litigation -- and What You Should Be Doing About It* by Michael G. Trachtman, The Corporate Counselor, www.law.com

Here's A Perfectly Legal Way For You To Save A Bundle Of Money On Taxes While Updating Outdated Computer Equipment, But You Have To Act FAST...

Please forgive me for the headline if it seems a bit “sensational,” but I really needed a way to get your attention about a perfectly legal way to save quite a bit of money on taxes while updating outdated computer equipment that is going to quickly pass you by if you don't act soon.

Thanks to the **recently updated** tax deduction titled “Section 179 election” (see www.section179.org for details), the Federal Government allows you to buy **up to \$25,000** in machinery, computers, software, office furniture, vehicles or other tangible goods and take the full expense deduction in the current year, thereby **REDUCING** your taxable income on your **current year's tax return**.

It's important to note that this is significantly less than the 2013 deduction allowances, but is still real money in your pocket! But you have to act now, as once the clock strikes midnight on December 31st, Section 179 can't help your 2014 profits anymore.

But Here's How I'm Going To “Sweeten The Pot” And Help You Save Even MORE Money

In the spirit of saving you money, I've decided to “sweeten the pot” and make the following offer to anyone looking to take advantage of this end-of-year deduction. Call us before December 15, 2014, to discuss potential hardware purchases in your business, and not only will we provide you with a full action plan to implement your new technology before December 31st, we will also send you a FREE copy of the book *1001 Deductions And Tax Breaks 2014: Your Complete Guide To Everything Deductible* – a smart business owner is always looking for more ways to save money!

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



Pebble Steel

Pebble Steel does more than just tell the time — this smart watch displays e-mail, text messages, caller ID and other notifications from your favorite apps, reading them straight from your iPhone or Android phone. Pebble cleverly vibrates on your wrist to alert you of incoming calls, meeting reminders or approved notifications. Leave your phone in your pocket as you go about your day-to-day activities.

The long-lasting battery life and the easy-to-use design makes this watch both stylish and necessary in this day and age, and its e-Paper screen makes it easy to see in both direct sunlight and even underwater.

Pebble Steel is available on Amazon.com for \$149.99. With this gadget, whose battery can go for a week without charging, the integration of technology in your life will be smoother and much more hands-free.

Barn Movers

In 1981 Donna and Herman Ostry bought a farm in the small town of Bruno, Nebraska, about 60 miles outside of Omaha. The farm came with a big barn that had been built back in the 1920s and also had a nice little creek that flowed through their property. The creek was both a blessing and a problem for the Ostrys. It was great to have readily available water for their farm animals but it also flooded a lot during heavy rains. The barn floor seemed to always be wet and muddy, and then in 1988 they had a huge flood where the water rose about 30 inches up the side of the barn walls.

The Ostrys desperately needed to move the barn to higher ground, but the cost to contract with a company that has both the capability and equipment to move a barn of this size was prohibitive. One night, sitting around the dinner table, Herman Ostry commented that if he had enough people he could pick the barn up and move it to higher ground. Everyone laughed off the comment as silly ... everyone except his son Mike.

I wonder if "young" Mike knew that people scoffed at the idea of traveling 30 miles per hour on a railroad car. People actually thought that traveling that fast would stop the circulation of the blood. I wonder if "young" Mike knew that Eli Whitney was laughed at when he showed his first cotton gin, that Thomas Edison had to install his electric light free of charge in an office building before anyone would look at it or that Samuel Morse had to plead before 10 Congresses before they would even look at his telegraph (*which revolutionized communication*). Maybe "young" Mike just thought ... **WHY NOT** ... and then he set out to figure out a way to make his Dad's statement a reality.

Young, inexperienced, doesn't-know-any-better Mike did some calculations and figured out that the barn weighed about 17,000 pounds. He then figured out that he could design a steel grid system that he could place under the barn that would weigh another 3,000 pounds. So, the total weight that would need to be lifted was 10 tons. "Young" Mike figured if he could gather up about 350 people, they would all need to only be able to lift approximately 50 pounds each.

Mike presented his calculations to his dad, and they both thought it would work. Mike and his dad got a little lucky on the timing when they presented their idea to their small town. Nebraska was getting ready to celebrate its centennial, and the town of Bruno had put together a committee of townspeople to decide on different things to do for the celebration. Mike and his dad convinced the town to make the barn moving a part of the celebration. The word got out and over 4,000 people from 11 states witnessed the event.

A little before 11 a.m. on July 30th, 1988, in front of the local television cameras, 344 people moved the barn 143 feet up a gentle slope to its new foundation. *All in all*, it took 3 minutes to move the barn. So, the next time somebody hits you with an idea that you think is silly or maybe even impossible ... think again, and never discount the **POWER of TEAMWORK**.

Relive this idea again in your head. Someone in a meeting says, *"Let's move a 17,000-pound barn 143 feet up a slope, and do it in less than 3 minutes, using no machinery."* Now, that idea sounds pretty nuts, ridiculous, stupid, impossible and far-fetched to me. But a need, a desire, a creative mind, a well-designed plan and a giant team, **all working together**, made it happen.



Robert Stevenson is a highly sought after, internationally known speaker. He is the author of the best-selling books *How to Soar Like an Eagle in a World Full of Turkeys* and *52 Essential Habits for Success*. Robert is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) and is a former All-American Athlete. He started his first business at 24 and has owned several companies. Robert has international sales experience dealing in over 20 countries and his client list reads like a Who's Who in Business. He has shared the podium with such renowned names as Generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf, former President George H.W. Bush, Anthony Robbins and Steven Covey. www.robertstevenson.org/

Client Spotlight:



"Orthodontics is all about smiles, and we want to make sure that our patients stay smiling throughout their treatments and long after their braces have been removed. Our practice is known for its friendly, welcoming, and professional atmosphere, where we treat patients with the respect and care they deserve. This is a family practice, and we treat our patients the way we would expect our own families to be treated."

Dr. Dyer has over 30 years of experience treating a variety of complex and routine orthodontic cases. He enjoys getting to help his patients achieve the beautiful smiles they've always wanted and looks forward to spending time with each individual patient during the appointment. Dr. Dyer and his team offer comprehensive orthodontic care that includes braces for children and adults, early interceptive treatment, Invisalign invisible braces, TMJ diagnostic and treatment, and teeth whitening.

Please feel free to contact our practice, and a member of our team will be happy to answer any questions that you may have, as well as schedule your complimentary initial consultation. Our phone number is 940-240-5400 and our website is ARGYLEBRACES.com.
-Dr. Dyer



THE BUSINESS INNOVATION TECHNIQUE OF BLENDING

Entrepreneurs are natural innovators, but even the most forward-thinking people sometimes need a little nudge to help open their minds to new possibilities for growth.

One of the best ways to think outside of the box is to start asking “what if” questions. Here’s a “what if” question I’ve been kicking around lately: What if we took 2 disparate businesses and blended them to make something new? I’m not talking about merging or partnering with another company; I’m talking about blending business methodologies from 2 (or more) industries to create a new business, or dramatically improve an existing business.

A classic example of this is Commerce Bank. Founded by Vernon Hill in 1973, Commerce Bank blended 2 industries: fast-food restaurants and banking. The owner of a fast-food restaurant franchise, Vernon Hill’s bright idea was to bring the convenience and perks of fast food to banking.

For example, fast-food restaurants are open every day, and they start early and close late; Hill implemented extended hours at Commerce Bank and kept the doors open 7 days a week. No other bank had done this before.

Hill blended other systems from his fast-food franchise when he launched his blended business. He installed a “Penny Arcade” coin-counting machine in his lobby, which had the same effect as video games in family restaurants. Kids could count money and win a prize, and the adults loved it too.

One of my favorite examples of Hill’s blending genius is when you use the drive-thru window at Commerce Bank and get a treat for your dog, just like the toy in a kid’s meal. Is it any wonder people call it “McBank”? By blending 2 industries, Hill created the fastest-growing bank ever.

Commerce Bank grew from one location to more than 400, and the franchise sold for \$8.5 billion in 2007. See what a little game of “what if” can spark?

What if you blended your business with hallmarks from another industry? Start thinking WAY outside of the box, looking at winning concepts from industries that may seem to have nothing to do with your business. (Of course, you do have something in common with businesses in ALL industries: customers.) You never know—you just might make billions.

Consider yourself nudged.



MIKE MICHALOWICZ (pronounced mi-KAL-o-wits) started his first business at the age of 24, moving his young family to the only safe place he could afford – a retirement building. With no experience, no contacts and no savings, he systematically bootstrapped a multimillion-dollar business. Then he did it again. And again. Now he is doing it for other entrepreneurs. Mike is the CEO of Proventus Group, a consulting firm that ignites explosive growth in companies that have plateaued; a former small-business columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*; MSNBC’s business makeover expert; a keynote speaker on entrepreneurship; and the author of the cult classic book *The Toilet Paper Entrepreneur*. His newest book, *The Pumpkin Plan*, has already been called “the next *E-Myth!*” For more information, visit <http://www.mikemichalowicz.com/>

Refer Our Services And We’ll Donate \$100 To Your Favorite

We love having you as a customer and, quite honestly, wish we had more like you! So instead of just wishing, we’ve decided to enact a new “refer a friend” policy.

Refer any company with 10 or more computers to our office to receive a FREE Computer Network Assessment (a \$397 value). Once we’ve completed our initial appointment with your referral, we’ll donate \$100 to your favorite charity (even if that favorite charity is you) for every referral that you’ve sent, as a small thank-you for thinking of us.

Simply call us at 940-220-7817 or e-mail us at connect@master-computing.com with your referral’s name and contact information today!



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Finally! An Easy Way for You to Lower Your IT Support Costs While Practically Eliminating Frustrating Computer Problems, Error Messages, and Downtime

Announcing Our New Small Business “Computer Freedom” Plan Designed to Lower Your IT Costs While Making Your Network Run Faster and With Fewer Problems

It’s a fact of life: Computers need regular *preventative* maintenance to run smooth and secure. Ignore your computer network and you’ll end up with slow, unstable machines that are susceptible to viruses, hackers, data corruption, data loss, downtime, and general problems that annoy you and your staff. That’s why we’re so excited to offer our customers a service that will take all of the work and worry of computer maintenance off their plate.

We call it our [Small Business “Computer Freedom” Plan]. Under this program, you will get the basic computer network support you need for one low, fixed monthly rate without any surprises, hidden costs, or the expense of a full time IT staff! Just look at the benefits:

You’ll eliminate expensive repairs and data recovery costs. Our network monitoring and maintenance will allow us to see and prevent network problems before they turn into downtime and expensive repair bills.
As a matter of fact, we guarantee it.

You’ll eliminate expensive trip fees while receiving faster support. Our remote monitoring software will enable us to access and repair most network problems right from our offices. No more waiting around for a technician to show up!

How does faster performance, fewer error messages, and practically zero downtime sound to you? Under this program, that is exactly what we’ll deliver. Some parts of your system will degrade in performance over time, causing them to slow down, hang up, and crash. Under this plan we’ll make sure your network receives the critical maintenance it needs for maximum speed, performance, and reliability.

You will sleep easier knowing the “gremlins at the gate” are being kept out of your network. If you rely on your computer network for daily operations, it’s time to get serious about protecting it from viruses, hackers, spyware, and even disgruntled employees. Under this plan, we’ll keep watch 24-7.

Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Set To Expire In 2015

Microsoft has announced that as of July 14, 2015, it will discontinue support for its 11-year-old server operation system, Server 2003. This follows in the wake of its recent discontinuation of support for Windows XP this past spring. Failure to upgrade your server off of this operating system dramatically increases any company's cyber-security risks.

With server migrations taking on average 200 days from planning to completion (industry average), if you still have a server running this software active on your network, now is the time to start planning. End of support for Windows Server 2003 means:

- **No further updates or security patches released.** 37 critical updates were released for Server 2003 in 2013 alone. No updates will be released after 7/14/15.
- **Loss of compliance.** Various industry regulations and industry standards will no longer be able to be achieved if you are using Server 2003 actively on your network.
- **Increased security risks.** Any server running this operating system will be completely exposed to serious hacker attacks aimed at taking control of your network, stealing your data or crashing your systems.

Free Server 2003 Migration Plan Gets You Started

As your preferred Microsoft Certified Partner, we are committed to helping your company by offering a Windows Server 2003 Migration Plan for FREE.

To secure your FREE Server 2003 Migration Plan, call us today at 940-220-7817 or go online to: <http://www.master-computing.com/server2003>.

Who Else Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card?

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is April Roos from Denton! She was the first person to correctly answer my quiz question from last month: **Complete this old farmer's saying: "Rain in October means _____ in December."**

a) snow b) wind c) ice d) warmth e) mice

The correct answer was B) wind.. **Now, here's this month's trivia question. The winner will receive a gift card to Target.**

Which infamous criminal was born on the 12th of November 1934?

a) Ted Bundy b) John Gacy c) Charles Manson
d) Al Capone

E-mail Us Right Now With Your Answer!

trivia@master-computing.com

The Lighter Side: *How Balloons Teach Teamwork*



Once, in a seminar of about 50 people, the speaker decided to change his presentation to prove a point. He decided to do a group activity. He gave each person a balloon and asked them to write their names on it with a marker.

All the balloons were gathered up and put into a small room. The attendees were all let into the balloon-filled room and were asked to find the balloon with their own name on it within 5 minutes. As expected, everyone was frantically searching for their name, colliding with each other, pushing around others and creating utter chaos.

At the end of the 5 minutes, no one had found their own balloon.

The presenter then asked the attendees to randomly pick up one balloon and give it to the person whose name was written on it.

Within minutes, everyone had their own balloon.

"This is what is happening in our lives," the presenter explained.

"Everyone is looking frantically for their own happiness, not knowing where it is."

Our happiness lies in the happiness of others. Give happiness to other people, and you shall find your own.